



Arkansas Continuity
Of Operations Program

ACOOP News

November 6, 2009
Issue 8 Volume 1

This year will definitely be one to go down in the record books. Little Rock broke the previous wettest month record of 15.35 inches on Friday October 31st when 16.35 inches was reached. As a state, it is no doubt that we are due more sunshine. We are now in the top ten for wettest years on record with 64.98 inches as we move into November. One thing is for sure, fall is here! Take some time to enjoy the beautiful fall colors that are at peak in our natural state.

In this issue of *ACOOP News* we will discuss tips on flood prevention and flood safety.

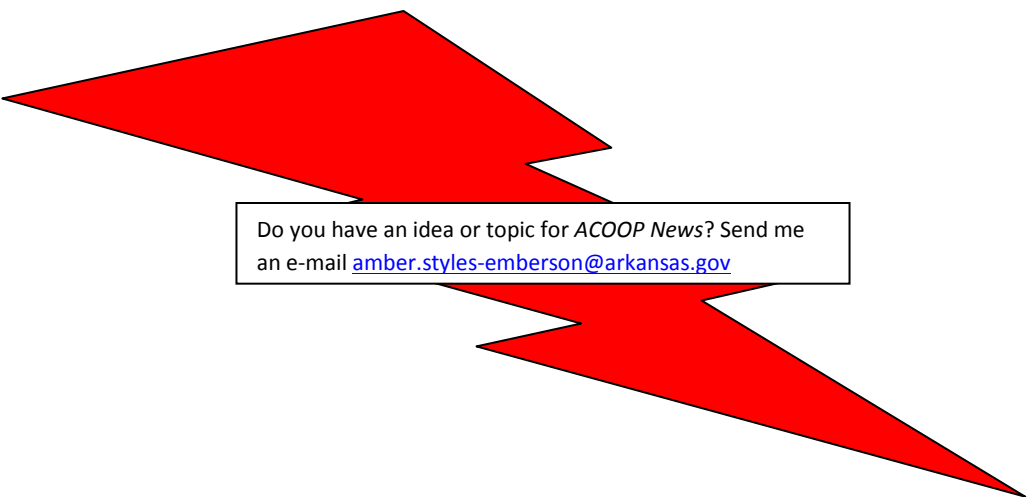
Source: www.katv.com

What Constitutes a Flood?

Floods are one of the most common hazards in the United States. Flood effects can be local, impacting a neighborhood or community, or very large, affecting entire river basins and multiple states.

However, all floods are not alike. Some floods develop slowly, sometimes over a period of days. But flash floods can develop quickly, sometimes in just a few minutes and without any visible signs of rain. Flash floods often have a dangerous wall of roaring water that carries rocks, mud, and other debris and can sweep away most things in its path. Overland flooding occurs outside a defined river or stream, such as when a levee is breached, but still can be destructive. Flooding can also occur when a dam breaks, producing effects similar to flash floods.

Be aware of flood hazards no matter where you live, but especially if you live in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam. Even very small streams, gullies, creeks, culverts, dry streambeds, or low-lying ground that appear harmless in dry weather can flood. Every state is at risk from this hazard.



Do you have an idea or topic for *ACOOP News*? Send me an e-mail amber.styles-emberson@arkansas.gov

Flood: Know Your Terms

Familiarize yourself with these terms to help identify a flood hazard:

Flood Watch:

Flooding is possible. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Flash Flood Watch:

Flash flooding is possible. Be prepared to move to higher ground; listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Flood Warning:

Flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately.

Flash Flood Warning:

A flash flood is occurring; seek higher ground on foot immediately.

Before a Flood

To prepare for a flood, you should:

- ✓ Avoid building in a flood prone area unless you elevate and reinforce your home.
- ✓ Elevate the furnace, water heater, and electric panel if susceptible to flooding.
- ✓ Install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent floodwater from backing up into the drains of your home.
- ✓ Contact community officials to find out if they are planning to construct barriers (levees, beams, floodwalls) to stop floodwater from entering the homes in your area.
- ✓ Seal the walls in your basement with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage.

During a Flood

If a flood is likely in your area, you should:

- ✓ Listen to the radio or television for information.
- ✓ Be aware that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for instructions to move.
- ✓ Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons, and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.

If you must prepare to evacuate, you should do the following:

- ✓ Secure your home. If you have time, bring in outdoor furniture. Move essential items to an upper floor.
- ✓ Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed to do so. Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

If you have to leave your home, remember these evacuation tips:

- ✓ Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- ✓ Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.

Driving Flood Facts

The following are important points to remember when driving in flood conditions:

- ✓ Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- ✓ A foot of water will float many vehicles.
- ✓ Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUV's) and pick-ups.

After a Flood

The following are guidelines for the period following a flood:

- ✓ Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
- ✓ Avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- ✓ Avoid moving water.
- ✓ Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- ✓ Stay away from downed power lines, and report them to the power company.
- ✓ Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe.
- ✓ Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.
- ✓ Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.
- ✓ Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals.

For more information on floods visit: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/flood/index.shtm>

Source: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/flood/index.shtm>

Kudos!

Twenty-one employees from the Arkansas Building Authority and Department of Information Systems successfully completed Community Emergency Response Team Training on October 22nd. This two day training taught employees from all backgrounds basic first aid, light search and rescue, fire suppression techniques, and personal preparedness. They were also taught how to utilize the incident command structure in table-top and full scale exercises. Guest speakers included Mike Gowen from Arkansas One Call, Scott Ausbrooks from the Arkansas Geological Survey, and Captain Dennis McCann from the Little Rock Fire Department. Special thanks to the Arkansas Building Authority for hosting this training and Deborah Kee from the Sebastian County CERT for assisting with the training.



Arkansas Continuity of Operations Program Training Schedule

COOP New User

Learn the components of building continuity of operations plans and how to use the Living Disaster Recovery Planning System (LDRPS)

November 10, 2009 8:30-12:00-**Class is full**

December 3, 2009 8:30-12:00

Pandemic Flu – facts, planning, & exercises

A good class for planners & staff! Learn about the types of flu, why pandemic flu is a threat and how we can prepare.

November 19, 2009 8:30-12:00

December 16, 2009 8:30-12:00

Test Training & Exercise

Testing you plans is important to the safety of your agency. Learn how to create effective exercises that will help get everyone involved.

December 29, 2009 8:30-12:00

COOP Workshop

Need an afternoon to work on your COOP plan with some guidance? Workshops are held after every class session in the DIS training room.

November 10, 2009 1:00-4:00

November 19, 2009 1:00-4:00

December 3, 2009 1:00-4:00

December 16, 2009 1:00-4:00

December 29, 2009 1:00-4:00

To register or ask about the location of these classes contact Amber Styles-Emberson:

amber.styles-emberson@arkansas.gov or calling 501-683-0502.

Unless noted otherwise, all training sessions are held in the MAC Building, #1 Capitol Mall, DIS 3rd floor training room.

We are available by appointment to help you with your plans individually and we can customize training to fit the needs of your agency or district.